

Easter activities in local area

By Linda Laws
Community relations advisor

This four-day weekend marks the beginning of our tourism season when many activities start up again, and stately homes and castles open their doors after the winter's break. So, if you are a member of the National Trust or English Heritage, polish off your membership cards and start traveling. Also, here are a few of the activities this weekend you might like to check out.

Music

Today, 54 cadets visiting from the United States Air Force Academy Catholic Choir will be in a concert at 7:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Church in Woolpit, which is east of Bury St. Edmunds off the A14.

Saturday, BBC Radio 2 presents a live broadcast of the Magic of Vienna played by the BBC Concert Orchestra at St. Andrew's Hall, Norwich. The concert starts at 7:30 p.m. and features music by Mozart, the Strauss family and others. Tickets range from £5 to £18.50. For more information, contact the Ticket Shop at The Guildhall, Gaol Hill, Norwich, NR2 1NF or call (01603) 764764.

In the countryside

Sunday and Monday, there is a Saxon Market at West Stow on the A1101 between Five Ways Roundabout and Bury St. Edmunds.

Step back in time to the Dark Ages, and meet the Saxons who might have lived here 1,500 years ago. You can even change your modern money into Saxon coins to buy authentic craft goods at the market. Craft demonstrations, refreshments and costumed Saxons are in the village. The market is open daily from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. Costs are: £3.80 for adults £2.70 for children and concessions and £10 for families.

Monday, there is an Easter Monday Family Quiz in Nowton Park, Bury St. Edmunds.

The quiz takes place between 1 - 4 p.m. in this beautiful park, where thousands of daffodils will be in full bloom. Follow a pleasant trail through the park to find questions on general knowledge and wildlife. Pick up a question sheet from the ranger centre. Prizes are available for winning families. The cost is £1 per family group.

Wicken Fen National Nature Reserve, which is nine miles south of Ely, off the A1123, will appeal to the Rambler and naturalist, and indeed anyone who likes being outdoors. Open from dawn to dusk, Wicken Fen is practically the last remaining undrained fen which has general access, via boardwalks, to plant, insect and bird life. There are also nature trails to meander along.

On the water

Saturday is the 143rd Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race. The race starts at 4 p.m. on the River Thames in London. The crews race over the 4.25-mile course from the University stone, Putney to Mortlake along the River Thames, in a tradition dating back to 1829. The fastest time for the course, 16 minutes 45 seconds, was set by Oxford in 1984. Each university trains a second crew which races approximately 30 minutes before the main race. The race is known as the Isis versus Goldie Race (Isis for Oxford, Goldie for Cambridge). Best



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views of the race can be seen from Putney and Chiswick Bridges.

Other events

Today through Monday you can attend The Craft Show at Blickling Hall, Nr. Aylsham, Norfolk

The setting for this craft show is the beautiful Jacobean Blickling Hall, now managed by the National Trust but once home to Anne Boleyn. The weekend's events include crafts, daily demonstrations and children's entertainment on Sunday and Monday (Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday only). Admission to the craft fair is £2.50 for adults and children are free. Entrance to Blickling Hall and Gardens is £6.60 for adults and £3.30 for children.

Today through Monday Kentwell Hall in Long Melford sponsors a great Easter Egg Hunt Quiz. People can win a massive Easter egg, and at the same time enjoy a recreation of everyday Tudor Life at the mellow red brick Tudor manor house, Kentwell Hall. The hall is open daily 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. Admission is £7.50 for adults and £5 for children.

Shopping

Today and Monday are Bank Holidays, so many high street stores will not be open. British banks and post offices will also not be open. Large out of town British supermarkets will be open, as will stores which sell household items for the do-it-yourself enthusiast.

Linda's tip

The cost of a television licence increases April 1. A colour licence will cost £91.50 (up from £89.50) and a black-and-white licence will be £30.50 (from £30). The television licence fee, as well as funding the BBC in its entirety, also funds 16 local and five national radio stations. A licence is required for anyone who receives a transmission signal within the U.K., including commercial stations and cable.

